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ABSTRACT

In the literature on sociobehavioral theory and educational administration, theorists are offering other methodologies as replacements for empiricism or positivism. Other paradigms, such as critical theory, and other methodologies are used. Sometimes these are combined with the empirical method. Research focusing on how people interact in the world is termed sociobehavioral theory, and the research on how people react in a patterned manner is termed organizational theory. Research on the behavior of school administrators is used to construct educational administration theory and is linked through methodology to the philosophic assumptions of a paradigmatic position. Positivism--the traditional paradigm of educational administration--assumes a reality that is objective and that can be fully measured and described. In the 1960s, the social sciences considered other approaches, such as critical theory, which examines the differences between ideas and reality, historical context, the claims of conceptual principles, subjective responses, and political and ethical concerns by using research methods that are more qualitative than statistical. This nonpositivistic view is no longer viewed as novel or radical. No view of reality should be excluded from the field of educational administration. A multiparadigmatic approach may yield more insight than any one viewpoint can offer. (Contains 63 references.) (RKJ)

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PARADIGMATIC DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION: POSITIVISM AND CRITICAL THEORY

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PARADIGMATIC DIFFERENCES IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION: POSITIVISM AND CRITICAL THEORY

The literature on sociobehavioral and educational administration theory exhibits a refutation of the positivistic assumptions of empirical methodology. Theorists are offering other methodologies as replacements for empiricism, such as critical theory, or are combining other methodologies with the empirical method. The level of this refutation does not center on methodology alone but also focuses on the philosophical assumptions which underlie empiricism. Thus, the differences over methodology encompasses differences over paradigmatic positions.

Paradigms as Bases for Research and Theory

A paradigm is a set of interrelated assumptions about the social world which provides a philosophical and conceptual framework for the organized study of that world; "it stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community (Kuhn, 1970, p. 175). A paradigm is a view of the world and of the reality which exists in that world. How that reality is defined and how that definition of reality allows one to know that world are the philosophical assumptions of the paradigm. This prior ontological question undergirds the epistemological claim about how knowledge is attained and tested. The methodology one would use to elaborate reality is derived from this philosophical frame of reference.

However, the conceptual bases for the philosophical assumptions which are the fundamental ideations for paradigmatic development are themselves derived from belief systems. As Dewey (1957) explained: "It became the work of philosophy to justify on rational grounds the spirit, though not the form, of accepted beliefs and traditional customs" (p. 18). Thus, these differences between those who accept alternative paradigms are second-level differences in that paradigms are belief systems based on belief systems.

Paradigms are not fixed perspectives of reality but historically are formalized perspectives of people's beliefs about reality. Paradigms were and are created by men and women and become viewed by them as existing alternatives. However, paradigms are alternatives only insofar as they are formalized perspectives of reality which people can accept as being most similar to their own beliefs about reality. According to Lane (1995):

> Paradigms exist as representations of the ways we think. These ways of thinking are different. They differ according to our individual quests for meaning and, if we find ourselves something of a positivist or something of a culturist, it is because that construction of reality is the one which has most meaning for us; not, incidentally, as theorists but, rather, as persons. (p. 72)

These formalized belief systems provide men and women with a general conceptual framework to which they can adhere.

Because paradigms are second-level belief systems, people accept these systems in response to a human social need to provide meaning for reality in a formalized manner. However, people's personal belief systems may be more comprehensive than the formal

conceptual framework to which they adhere. Because the accepted paradigm incorporates the majority of a person's perspective of reality, however that perspective was developed, that person would be considered to be an advocate of that accepted paradigm or, as Lane (1995) clarified, ". . .we have to choose that alternative which has (for us, individually) the most meaning" (p. 73). Paradigms are not ultimate answers to the definition of reality but the created concepts which people have proposed to explain reality in a formalized and logical manner. Because reality can be conceptualized in different ways, there exist different paradigms.

Kuhn (1970) held that: "All scientific investigation is based upon some paradigm" (p. 109). Magoon (1977) elaborated on Kuhn's premise:

> Methodologies are the puzzle-solving devices that bridge the gap between the image of a phenomenon and the phenomenon itself. Methodologies link the researcher to the situation being studied in terms of rules, procedures, and general protocol that operationalize the network of assumptions embodied in the researcher's paradigm and epistemological stance. (p. 21)

Thus, a specific research methodology is derived from and must be consistent with a paradigm's philosophical assumptions.

How one defines reality and how one is able to know and communicate this defined reality leads directly to methodology of research. Burrell and Morgan (1979) clarified this relationship between theorists' philosophical assumptions and the research method theorists utilize: "Different ontologies, epistemologies and models of human

nature are likely to incline social scientists toward different methodologies" (p. 108). This is because the focus of knowledge for each theoretical position logically delineates the methodology for knowing reality. The very definition of reality determines how reality is to be known.

The clarification of how one accepts or rejects alternative paradigms is most apparent in the literature which presents the conceptual bases for paradigmatic change. A fundamental assumption of this position is that method had a paradigmatic basis and those who engage in a specific research method share the same paradigmatic assumptions. This perspective is most noted by those authors (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Kuhn, 1970) who present the arguments for paradigmatic change on a logical basis. These authors argue that the assumptions of different paradigms are logically exclusive in that these assumptions cannot be derived from or reduced to one another.

The derivative educational administration literature, in general, also views a change in paradigm positions as an either/or position. Paradigms are seen as true alternatives, in the sense that one cannot operate in more than one at a time, the reasoning being that the assumptions of each are mutually exclusive. Burrell and Morgan (1979) described this exclusivity:

> Our research suggests that whilst the activity within the context of each paradigm is often considerable, inter-paradigmatic journeys are rarer. . . . For a theorist to switch paradigms calls for a change in meta-theoretical assumptions, something which, although manifestly possible, is not often

achieved in practice. (pp. 24-25)

In accepting the assumptions of one paradigm, the theorist is viewed as being impelled to reject the assumptions of other paradigms.

Kuhn's text, The structure of scientific revolutions (1970), presented the way a paradigmatic shift occurs. While Kuhn applied his concepts of paradigmatic shift exclusively to the field of science, he did not exclude its application to other fields of knowledge:

> A number of those who have taken pleasure from it have done so less than because it illluminates science than because they read its main theses as applicable to many other fields as well. I see what they mean and would not like to discourage their attempts to extend the position, but their reaction has nevertheless puzzled me. To the extent that the book portrays scientific development as a succession of tradition-bound periods punctuated by non-cumulaltive breaks, these are undoubtedly of wide applicability. (p. 208)

Kuhn indicated that his ideas were borrowed from the fields of the histories of literature, music, arts, political development and other human activities. Thus the shift from one paradigm to another in any field of knowledge, such as educational administration, can be viewed within the conceptual framework of Kuhn's theses.

Such a change is viewed as so profound as to have Kuhn (1970) call it a "gestalt switch." Burrell and Morgan (1979) offered the same perspective on paradigmatic change and concluded that paradigms logically should be developed in isolation: "Contrary to the

widely held belief that synthesis and mediation between paradigms is what is required, we argue that the real need is for paradigmatic closure" (pp. 397-398). Kuhn also viewed paradigms as isolationist in that communities of believers only focus on those problems which fit into the communities' belief system. All other problems are excluded.

Kuhn (1970) proposed that a scientific revolution occurs when scientists accept a new paradigm as the basis for science. The first stage of any acceptance of science is the pre-paradigm stage when phenomena are studied from different points of view. This is followed by the emergence of a new paradigm which is published by a few well-respected scientists. Meanwhile, traditional science is conducted as it has been in the past. There comes a crisis stage when traditional science is unable to generate needed theories and to solve a few problems that practitioners have come to recognize as acute. A sudden change to the new paradigm occurs because the new paradigm can solve the problems that led the old paradigm to crisis. The final stage in the revolution is when normal science is conducted under the new paradigm.

Phillips (1987) clarified the manner in which this scientific revolution occurs:

> For scientists working within a particular paradigm difficulties or anomalies arise from time-to-time, but these are usually set aside as being of minor importance. Eventually a revolutionary scientist treats them as a sign of decay, and is inspired to produce a new paradigm--a new framework of concepts and methods and so forth. The development of this new paradigm, and its competition for dominance with the older one, constitutes a scientific

revolution. (p. 21)

Scientific revolution begins with dissatisfaction with the established paradigm and moves to an overthrow of the established paradigm by a new paradigm which encompasses and satisfies the dissatisfactions of the established paradigm.

Because these authors assume the direct linkage of research methodology to paradigmatic assumptions, they also argue that a change in paradigms causes a change in research methodologies. Therefore, alternative paradigm presentation seeks either unity by ascendancy or pluralism by paradigm choice in methodology because as Reichardt and Cook (1979) contended: "Since methods are linked to different paradigms and since one must choose between these mutually exclusive and antagonistic world views, one must also choose between the method-types" (p. 11).

Kuhn (1970) epitomized the representatives of this view in his writings and presented the following argument to summarize this position:

> Men whose research is based on shared paradigms are committed to the same rules and standards for scientific practice. That commitment and the apparent consensus it produces are prerequisites for normal science, i.e., for the genesis and continuation of a particular research tradition. (p. 11)

The logic of this position is that there is a direct linkage between the paradigm a theorist is committed to and the research methodology that theorist uses.

Conversely, this assumed relationship between paradigm and research methodology holds that those who engage in the same research methodology agree on the

same paradigmatic assumptions. However, various theorists can engage in the same research methodology and each can assume differing paradigmatic positions. A researcher's methodology informs the observer of only the methodology, not of the paradigmatic posture, which the researcher assumes. One must look to the goals which the researcher seeks to obtain to understand the distinction between paradigmatic positions.

Thus, a change in paradigmatic position need not automatically cause a change in research methodology. According to Kuhn (1970): "The decision to reject one paradigm is always simultaneously the decision to accept another, and the judgment leading to that decision involves the comparison of both paradigms with nature and with each other" (p.77). However, depending upon which paradigm is accepted, the theorist may not automatically change research methodologies, but may engage in the same methodology for a different purpose.

The end-product of research is termed theory. Theory, as defined by Wilson and Zimmerman (1979-1980), "encompasses the basic rationale that defines and justifies interest in some domain of phenomena; in a narrower sense, it consists of specific formulations concerning the phenomena itself" (p. 52). Theory is thus seen as being both directive and explanatory in that it directs the researcher's focus toward specific phenomena to be investigated and also, as the end-product of investigation, assists the researcher to further understand the phenomena.

The results of research which indicate how people interact in the world is termed sociobehavioral theory and the results of research on how people react in a patterned

manner is termed organizational theory. The behavior of school administrators is subsumed under the term educational administration theory. Therefore, theory in educational administration has a direct linkage through methodology to the philosophical assumptions of a paradigmatic position (Kuhn, 1970; Reichardt and Cook, 1979).

Positivism

Positivism, as the traditional paradigm in educational administration, traces its philosophical roots back to the Aristotelian position that reality is external to the knowledge-seeker. Positivism, since the nineteenth century, has become the fundamental framework for knowledge seeking and testing, and is the philosophical basis for empirical inquiry.

> Bates (1980) described the scientific model of the positivistic paradigm as:
>
> A model based upon the idea of independent reality which is subject to measurement and description, and explicable in terms of theory which can be verified by independent and impartial testing, resulting in propositions and explanations that are free from cultural or historical bias. (p. 4)

Positivism is based upon the philosophical assumptions of the existence of an objective reality which can be known only in an objective manner. Thus, the empirical research model measures and describes an external reality and is assumed to be the only method to discover the regularities which underlie objective reality.

Positivism and the philosophical assumptions which support this position have become equated with scientific methodology. This has resulted in a "dominant positivistic

orientation affecting most of our intellectual life" (Bernstein, 1971, p. 307). Bernstein viewed the position of researchers as entrenched in positivistic paradigmatic concepts:

> The dominant characteristic of our philosophic age is one of ignorance and suspicion of different philosophic styles and movements usually mixed with disdain, and a stubborn conviction that one's way of philosophizing is the worthwhile way. (p. 3)

Positivism and its empirical methodology have become edified into a position against which all other paradigms and their research methodologies are to be evaluated.

History of Educational Administration Paradigms

Traditional educational administration theory has strong roots in the positivistic assumptions and methodology of sociobehavioral theory (Callahan, 1962). Scientific methodology became the bellweather for research in all fields of inquiry. As the scientific world view gained dominance, so did the idea that science could achieve human progress in both the areas of technology and of human actions (Schon, 1983).

In 1945, Herbert Simon published Administrative behavior in which he called for a "knowledge of administrative realities founded on and validated by the power, objectivity and utility of science" (Greenfield, 1993a, p. 135). Simon critiqued the then-known knowledge in school administration as little more than personal prescriptive judgments by practitioners. A body of knowledge about educational administration did not exist, but only personal experiences of current and former practitioners.

In striving to have their research efforts viewed as a developing body of authoritative and legitimate knowledge, educational administration researchers sought theory development by linkage to the social science model and adopted its empirical methodology. Riffel (1979) described the strong positivistic climate in which educational administration theory developed:

> The theory movement in education administration was shaped by American intellectual and social life in the 1940's and 1950's. The period following World War II saw: the enormous explosion of the physical sciences; a preoccupation in the philosophy of science with the epistemological problems of the physical sciences and a rejection of Dewey's emphasis on intuition and learning by experience; the desire of social scientists to emulate the methods and, hopefully, the successes of physical scientists, and a preoccupation with social ability, along with a concern for normalcy and modal behavior. (p. 198)

Thus, from its inception, educational administration theory was firmly based in the positivistic paradigm and its derived methodology of empiricism.

In the 1950s, the field of educational administration began to draw on the concepts and theories from the social sciences which were based on positivism. According to Willower (1992), this effort to professionalize the field and legitimize scholarship in educational administration was supported by: "the Committee for the Advancement of School Administration of the American Association of School Administrators, the National Conference (now Council) of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) and, a

little later, the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA). The Kellogg Foundation provided financial support for a variety of the activities" (p. 3). In 1993, Willower confirmed this derivation of the field of educational administration from the social sciences:

> The social sciences were the main sources of ideas and the main objects of emulation. Educational administration was ripe for change. The sage advice and practical tips that were a major part of the field's lore seemed increasingly inadequate as recognition grew that the social sciences dealt with the subject matter of school administration. . . .the idea that social science knowledge and methods could put educational administration on a firmer intellectual footing was soon widely accepted. (p. 157)

Thus, the researchers and theorists in educational administration assumed the logical positivistic paradigm with its derived research methodology of empiricism.

Educational administration theorists also sought validation of their scientific position by adoption and adaptation of organizational theory which had developed under the positivistic perspective. Since American schools had assumed the business model in their early formulation of common education (Callahan, 1962), the belief that organizational theory should be incorporated into school management practices was not inconsistent. Such incorporation is consistent with the positivistic position of generalizability of human behavior. Empirical educational research abounded in the application of management and organizational theories of business and other social

structures to educational organizations and structures. This idealization of efficiency and adherence to measurable outcomes of human behavior by educational administration researchers would demonstrate that organizational theory as integrated into educational administration theory is congruent with the positivistic theoretical position.

In 1957, Daniel Griffiths, a major proponent of positivistic educational administration, summarized the promise of a scientific study of school administration:

> A theory of administrative behavior will make it possible to relate what now appear to be discrete acts to one another so as to make a unified concept. The great task of science has been to impose an order upon the universe. Kepler's Laws, for instance, impose a set of relationships upon the planets of the solar system. . . .This is the great task of theory in the field of educational administration. Within a set of principles, yet to be formulated, it will be possible to recognize interrelationships among apparently discrete acts, it will be possible to predict the behavior of individuals within the organizational framework, and it will be possible to make decisions that will result in a more efficient and effective enterprise. (p. 388)

Under the promise of positivism, the field of educational administration would possess a unified research methodology and, ultimately, a set of principles would be discovered which could predict and control educational administration behavior.

Through the 1950s, 1960s, and into the 1970s, the scientific study of educational administration prevailed unquestioned. Countless empirical studies were conducted.

Educational administration was viewed as a legitimate field of study based upon its scientific foundations. However, as Willower (1996) explained: "The ebullient spirit of those times became something of a siren song because many professors, not attuned to the limitations of science, expected too much. When some of the more serious problems of the schools remained intractable despite progress in inquiry, disillusionment followed" (p. 346). The mid 1970s began to see the public questioning of positivism especially noted in the Greenfield-Griffiths debates.

Similar arguments to those being raised by some sociobehavioral theorists regarding the positivistic paradigm and its derived methodology also were being raised by some educational administration theorists due to the strong linkage between educational administration theory and the positivistic paradigm. The most noted discussions of the objective versus subjective issue were the Greenfield-Griffiths "debates" in the 1970s and 1980s. There never was an actual face-to-face confrontation between Thomas Barr Greenfield and Daniel Griffiths, instead, there was a series of controversial exchanges in academic journals (English, 1992). Greenfield argued that "human actors are interpreting beings who can never have direct access to reality and that empiricist science is too narrow to deal with the phenomena of the social world" (Lakomski & Evers, 1994, p. 264). While Greenfield developed his position for the need of a strong subjective element in educational administration theory with the focus on change, Griffiths held to the positivistic position maintaining that positivism was flawed only in the manner of its application to educational administration theory (Gronn, 1983).

Greenfield challenged the alleged objectivity of science and its applicability to social phenomena. He posited that subjectivity must be included in educational administration research and study (Evers & Lakomski, 1993). Greenfield (1993b) argued that:

> The theories sought by the founders of the New Movement were to be something like Newton's laws of dynamics: mathematical formulae relating operationally defined concepts would direct researchers to reason how the administrative world was constructed; it would enable them to devise strong hypotheses for checking their reasoning and direct them to the data relevant to such experimentation. (p. 34)

However, Greenfield argued that the results of objective scientific research as applied to educational administration produced little, if any, guidance for practice because the subject studied should be based not only on human action, but also on human intention.

Martin (1984) also questioned the claim that only a single paradigm can be the basis for educational administration theory:

> There are indications that administrative phenomena, conceptually, include both objective and subjective realities. This, therefore, implies a pluralistic epistemology. There can then be only a partial fit between scientific methodology and administrative reality. Objective and subjective realities in the world of practice do not occur in pure forms, but are intricately and at times inextricably intertwined. (p. 17)

As American society questioned and replaced societal icons in the 1970s and 1980s, educational administration theorists likewise questioned and sought to replace the icon of the positivistic paradigm.

The field of social science likewise was in turmoil. From the mid 1960s, the social sciences were moving toward such Continental approaches as critical theory, phenomenology, and hermeneutics (Schon, 1987). Willower (1993) contended that the thought and scholarship in fields of study are influenced by the politics of their times. Scholars in the social studies were among those affected by the growing distrust of societal institutions, including the institution of positivism. Thus, at a time of questioning of research and paradigmatic assumptions, alternative paradigms were already being considered in the social studies.

Critical Theory

While maintaining strong political overtones, the theorists who adhere to critical theory have sought to neutralize specific political overtones by placing emphasis on its universal application in a philosophical manner. As such, Horkheimer (cited in Held, 1980) defined critical theory in a broad theoretical manner:

> Critical theory aims to assess the breach between ideas and reality. The method or procedure is immanent criticism. Immanent criticism confronts the existent, in its historical contexts, with the claim of its conceptual principles, in order to criticize the relation between the two and transcend them. (p. 183)

While reality is criticized and contrasted with ideation about reality, the political aspects of

reality become just one of the factors affecting reality.

The culmination of critical theory concepts is found is the ideas of the Frankfurt School whose members (Adorno, Marcuse, Horkheimer, and Habermas) sought to develop a theoretical position that would lead to more than knowledge. While each theoretician developed individual emphases within critical theory, these theoreticians' goal was to change society. The members of the Frankfurt School were dispersed in the late 1930s due to World War II. As their writings were translated, a renewed interest in the relation of critical theory to educational practice developed in the 1960s in the United States.

In the 1960s and 1970s, critical theory became focus for social scientists. Critical theory with its basis in Marxist sociology received minimum attention during the years of the Cold War when the threat of communism held prominence in American politics (Lutz, 1992). Americans equated Marxism with communism. However, as social scientists and, ultimately educational administration theorists, delved into the newly translated works of the members of the Frankfurt School, theorists became aware that critical theorists had rejected Russian Communism and the concepts of critical theory became politically more acceptable as the demise of Russian Communism was made apparent.

The appeal of critical theory during the 1960s and 1970s was that it focused on the individual against the system. It favored radical reform and class equity at a time when these issues were prominent in American society (Willower, 1992). Critical theory and other subjectivist paradigms fitted the pessimism and disillusion with social institutions

that marked the times. Personal alienation could be countered through these new ways of viewing life and the world:

> My suggestion is that we capture our daily alienation, the alienation of our routine, of repeating things bureaucratically, of doing the same thing every day at ten o'clock, for example, because "it has to be done" and we never question why. We should take our lives into our own hands and begin to exercise control. We should try to stand up to, and get out from under time. (Freire, 1985, p. 198)

Critical theory captured the anti-establishment mood of the times and provided a new paradigm for educational theorists to study and explore.

The concepts underlying critical theory drew those in educational administration who found positivism wanting. As English (1992) explained:

> . . . the methodology and traditions employed by Griffiths and others in a long line of studies trying to ape the natural sciences had produced an intellectual pygmy and reduced the field to numbers which accounted for very little in explaining educational administration or anything else. (p. 41)

When critical theory and subjectivistic paradigms entered the field of educational administration, theorists who found positivism lacking as a paradigm embraced these alternative paradigms because they found newer and more relevant concepts upon which to explore administrative theory and practice. The debates over philosophical issues in educational administration began.

During the 1980s, several theorists such as Richard Bates, Michael Apple, and William Foster applied critical theory to education in general and to educational administration specifically. Critical theory quietly began to be read about and accepted by some theorists in the field of educational administration.

This acceptance was noted by the May 1985 Conference on the Study of Human Research at the University of Alberta during which a week of seminars was devoted to the application of critical theory to education. In 1994, Hoy reported the results of a study by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) which had commissioned seven study teams to identify traditional and emerging perspectives in educational administration. The study concluded that "the field seems to be moving away from the study of particular administrative and teaching skills, behaviors, and competencies toward an examination of the role of educational administration and teaching in a democratic society" (p. 196). The UCEA report concluded that the most prominent emerging perspective in educational administration was critical theory.

In 1992, Lather noted that the field of educational administration was in a state of true revolution: "Hence, it is both a dizzying and an exciting time in which to do social inquiry. It is a time of openness and questioning of established paradigms in intellectual thought" (p. 88). By 1995, McLaren saw that critical theory was firmly established alongside of positivism:

> Professors comfortably seasoned by 20 years of gathering hefty research grants for their empirical studies and who have comfortably taught 'the

> canon' and the enlightened metaphysic of objective truth under the roof of the modern imperium are perhaps becoming fearful of the transdisciplinary trajectories embraced by their their theoretically more venturesome younger colleagues who have crossed over to the other side of the tracks where the criticalists hang out, where they are able to expose conventional research practices to the contestable contingencies and categories that constitute them, where knowledge and the history of its production can no longer be treated as ideologically disinterested, and where research practices are able to thumb a ride down 'discourse lane' with political and ethical concerns. (p. 13)

Thus, at a time when education is being closely scrutinized as to its methods and outcomes, some educational administration theorists are questioning the results of historically basing their theoretical position under the positivistic perspective and are embracing alternative paradigms such as critical theory.

Paradigmatic Differences

Differences about which paradigm should be the basis for educational administration research, theory, and practice are confrontational and personal because theorists are defending their beliefs and values about reality. As Kuhn (1970) indicated, paradigmatic opponents "will inevitably talk through each other when debating the relative merits of their respective position" (p. 109). King (1980) argued that proponents of

specific paradigms tend to protect themselves from the infiltration of ideas which are oppositional to their accepted paradigms:

> . . .the whole institutional apparatus of a normal scientific community--controlling as it does the training and socialization of recruits, access to research facilities and channels of communication and publication, the distribution of rewards--is geared toward keeping the practice of science within the bounds set by ruling paradigms, and thus preventing the energies of scientists from being dissipated by their engaging in interminable disputes over basic assumptions, or tackling insoluble problems, or engaging in debates with "deviants" who do not accept the rules of the game. (p. 111)

Thus, knowing the paradigmatic bases for alternative perspectives of reality is required, no matter how difficult seeing the other community of believers' perspective might be. In order to refute positivism, a person should know what positivism is and is not. In order to accept or reject critical theory, one must know the philosophical bases for this paradigm and the resulting effects its acceptance will have on educational research, theory, and practice. Paradigms and their derived research methodologies provide a conceptual richness and diversity which no isolated mode of research can ever provide. In order for researchers and practitioners to become aware of these significant consequences of paradigmatic choice, they first must become aware of what these paradigms encompass.

Evans (1984) argued that paradigmatic differences will directly affect educational administration practice:

> How we choose to respond to the questions of what counts as science and therefore what we allow as knowledge are of decisive significance not only for educational administration concerned as a field of study but more importantly as an area of professional practice. (p. 2)

Educational administration theory is derived from research and this theory provides direction for educational administration practice and future research. Different research methods will produce different emphases of theory which can, thereby, affect the direction for educational administration practice.

WHERE ARE WE?

The field of educational administration has slowly and quietly moved toward permitting, if not accepting, paradigms other than positivism. Authors present articles and books on various paradigms' application to educational administration and the debates about positivism are less volatile. Educational administration theorists, researchers, and practitioners are exposed to and some even have embraced new views of reality. Evers and Lakomski (1993) have argued that educational research is already in a postpositivistic era in that "a number of so-called 'paradigms' have found acceptance alongside traditional methods of acquiring and justifying knowledge" (p. 140). Even the traditional textbook in educational administration theory by Hoy and Miskel in the 1996 edition indicated that critical theory, postmodernist theory, and feminist theory are emergent perspectives in educational administration. However, Hoy and Miskel devote less than one page to an

explanation and application of critical theory and the text remains firmly grounded in positivism.

The emergent perspectives of reality in educational administration are no longer viewed as novel or radical. Eisner (1998) proposed that the field of education has truly changed:

> I believe the fourth quarter of the twentieth century will be seen as a watershed in the history of educational research. Since the turn of the century the dominant methodological orientation to educational research has been shaped by behavioristic and positivistic assumptions about the nature of knowledge. . . . Although the ideal of the experiment in the physical sciences is still embraced by some, it has been recognized increasingly that the very conditions that make experimental controls tight in the laboratory are the least likely to be replicated in the "messy" environment of the classroom and school. Researchers seek other approaches. (p. 101)

Because paradigms are based on individuals' belief systems, residual arguments in the field still occur. Lutz (1993) termed those still engaged in paradigmatic debate as obstructionists because they "choose to attack the work of others whose methodology and paradigm does not agree with their own" (p. 464). A call for acceptance and tolerance now pervades the field of educational administration with argumentation the exception by a few stalwart researchers and theorists.

Willower (1992) clarified that the future of educational administration will probably be characterized by eclecticism in theory and methodology. While paradigms other than positivism will be provided with equal status, Willower contended that positivism should not be eliminated and replaced but remain in the mainstream of educational administration theory and research because "To separate science from school life is a serious error because the subject matter of social science used reflectively by a savvy administrator can drive school improvement and enhance student learning" (p. 19).

No view of reality should be excluded from the field of educational administration research, theory, and practice. Capper (1992) called for a multiparadigmatic approach because

> a multiparadigmatic approach to educational administration serves as an example of valuing multiple ways of viewing a situation from different epistemologies and methodologies and taking action beyond that of multiple approaches within one or two paradigms. In an age where it is important to pay attention to multiple 'ways of knowing,' a multiparadigmatic approach can be useful. (p. 28)

This multiparadigmatic approach has been utilized to critique the application of Total Quality Management in schools (Capper & Jamison, 1993) and to analyze site-based management in educational settings (Reitzug & Capper, 1996). Thus, educational administration theorists, researchers, and practitioners would have a choice among views of reality which would result in multiple methodologies and theories for practice.

Pohland (1992) argued that the field of educational administration has moved beyond positivism and now is in a pre-paradigm state. Using Kuhn's (1970) concepts on scientific revolutions, Pohland viewed movement toward revolution as a continuum ranging from pre-paradigm to normal science. He proposed that the field of educational administration is in a state of low cohesiveness and collegiality with non-standardized and practitioner oriented literature using lay language and viewing school administrators as dispersed generalists. If a field of knowledge such as educational administration must have a dominant paradigm accepted by a majority of researchers, then educational administration is now in the throes of such turmoil until one paradigm emerges as "the" paradigm.

Whether in defense of or in opposition to positivism, authors have taken sides because empirical research has been considered to be the only legitimate methodology in all fields of inquiry. Bendix and Roth (1971) clarified this opposition to positivism:

> From being a method of inquiry to answer carefully delimited questions, science has been turned into a fetish with which to interpret the world, advise politicians, examine the future, provide an education and entertain the public. (p. 102)

When any theoretical position or research methodology becomes established as the primary position or methodology, then proponents of other positions or methods will seek to "dethrone" this position or method. The proponents of other paradigms seek either to replace positivism or to establish an oligarchical paradigmatic situation.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS TO PARADIGMATIC DIFFERENCES

With the emerging acceptance of paradigms other than positivism during the 1970s and 1980s in the field of educational administration, some theorists proposed the combining of paradigms or methodologies as means to assuage those theorists who opposed the inclusion of new paradigms. Theorists sought resolution to the paradigm conflicts by combining paradigms, synthesizing methodologies, or imposing positivistic criteria on alternative paradigms.

A common formulation deriving from the criticism of positivism was the positioning of the positivistic paradigm in opposition to what is termed the "subjective," "qualitative," or "naturalistic" paradigm. Such distinction was made because of the acceptance by some theorists that the epistemological premises of subjective and objective knowledge are the fundamental differences among the theoretical positions.

Because of this assumed basic distinction, phenomenology, ethnomethodology, and critical theory were often viewed as one subjective position under such general headings as hermeneutics (Giddens, 1976), interpretative sociology (Schutz as cited in Giddens, 1976), naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) or constructionism (Magoon, 1977).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) defined their perspective of this subjectivistic paradigm:

> Naturalistic inquiry describes an alternative paradigm that, largely through historical accident, is now traveling under the name naturalistic. It has other aliases as well, for example, the postpositivistic, ethnographic, phenomenological, subjective, case study, qualitative, hermeneutic, humanistic. (p. 7)

In general categories, Lincoln and Guba described the assumptions of the positivistic paradigm and contrasted these assumptions with those of the naturalistic paradigm. The positivisitic paradigm posits reality as a single entitiy; the knower and known as independent; nomothetic statements as possible; causes as real; and inquiry as value free. The naturalistic paradigm assumes that realities are multiple; the knower and known interact; idiographic statements as possible; reality as constantly shaping; and inquiry as value bound. This proposed subjective paradigm was viewed as an alternative to positivism, and the focus of Lincoln and Guba's work was on the replacement of the positivistic paradigm with the naturalistic paradigm.

Reichardt and Cook (1979) used the terms "qualitative" and "quantitative" in describing oppositional paradigmatic positions. These authors defined the differences between the paradigms in the following manner:

> The quantitative paradigm is said to have a positivistic, hypothetico-deductive, particularistic, objective, outcome-oriented and natural science world view. In contrast, the qualitative paradigm is said to subscribe to a phenomenological, inductive, holistic, subjective, process-oriented, and social anthropological world view. (pp. 9-10)

Reichardt and Cook viewed the qualitative paradigm as the one which most appropriately discovers and communicates reality and they, therefore, concluded that it should replace the quantitative paradigm.

Magoon (1977), as a third example of those theorists who collapsed subjective paradigmatic assumptions into one paradigmatic position, termed such subjective paradigms as contructionism. People are not subject to the whims of an objective reality, but are active participants in the construction of reality. Magoon presented four assumptions of the constructivist approach to sociobehavioral theory:

> (1) Subjects being studied must at a minimum be considered knowing beings. (2) Their knowledge has a complex set of referents and meanings which must be taken into account in the study of actions and behavior. (3) Much human behavior must be understood as purposive. (4) Human beings have a highly developed capacity to attend to the meaning of complex communications rather than surface elements. (pp. 651-652)

Those authors who sought the solution over the concern with the positivistic paradigm by collapsing paradigmatic positions into objective and subjective paradigms presented a dichotomous choice for the theoretician and researcher. The choice remained on a paradigmatic level, but it was between two not multiple paradigms.

Another option presented by theorists to the paradigmatic problem was to seek a solution at the level of methodology. The focus was on research methodology alone and, as Reichardt and Cook (1979) indicated, paradigmatic and methodological issues should be considered separately:

> Confusing arguments over paradigms with arguments over methods only leads to the current state of affairs, where researchers are choosing up sides

> between the method-types. Redefining the debate as two separate and legitimate arguments reveals the fallacy of current ways: rather than being incompatible rivals, the methods can be used together as the research question demands. (p. 20)

Such a solution did not include questions or concerns about resolution of dichotomous and oppositional paradigmatic assumptions, but only sought the most appropriate research methodology.

Jick (1979) described a conceptualization of methodological synthesis in his presentation of the term "triangulation". Triangulation was defined as "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomena" (p. 602). The effectiveness of method combination rested on the premise that the weaknesses in each single method would be compensated for by the counter-balancing strengths of the other methodologies.

Underlying the concept of triangulation was the assumption that no one research method is able to produce truly realistic results. Each method has limitations derived from its underlying theoretical assumptions and only through multiple operationism can the researcher be assured that the variance reflected is that of the trait and not of the method.

In the synthesis of research methods, theorists proposed that both quantitative and qualitative methods be combined in order to obtain as accurate a knowledge of reality as possible. No method was seen as being inferior or superior because, as Filstead (1979) contended: "Neither one has the corner on the correct answers" (p. 42) or, as Reichardt and Cook (1979) summarized:

> There is nothing to stop the researcher, except perhaps tradition, from mixing and matching attributes from the two paradigms to achieve that combination which is most appropriate for the research problem and setting at hand. (p. 18)

The justification for such synthesis was that research should not be tied to paradigmatic argumentation, but that researchers should be allowed to conduct research in as facilitative a manner as possible.

Synthesis of research methodology was viewed as practical because both objective and subjective realities could be studied. Light and Pillemer (1984) argued: "Which approach is more appropriate, statistical or verstehen . . . depends upon both the research context and the ultimate purposes" (p. 107). Thus, the judgment of the researcher regarding the reality to be studied became the criteria for which method to apply to that reality. This judgment was based on specific instances of reality and could change as the researcher's view of reality changed. Campbell (1975) termed this judgment as "applied epistemology" (p. 191).

Another option proposed as a resolution to the concern over the positivistic paradigm was the imposition of positivistic validity and reliability criteria on qualitative research methodology. Advocates of this option did not seek paradigmatic or methodological synthesis, but sought to make the qualitative methodology more acceptable to traditional researchers by either highlighting the hypothesis-generating aspect of qualitative research or by applying positivistic research criteria to qualitative study. A compromise rather than a synthesis was sought.

Field work under the empirical model leads to the development of concepts and propositions which are quantitatively testable. Wilson and Zimmerman (1979-80) viewed qualitative research as not only producing an understanding of practical situations, but also generating "clear hypotheses that may lead to a serious test of the theoretical notions" (p. 72). The process whereby generalizations of qualitative research would occur was explained by Magoon (1977):

> Instead of traditional null hypothesis tests of a statistical nature being the final arbiters of research findings, one could instead evaluate one account of a situation and weigh this account against other accounts or the proposition that there is no pattern in the situation at all. Gradually one pattern would be recognized as the scientific explanation of that particular type of situation and would probably be recognized as a weak form of prediction. (p. 661)

Thus qualitative research would encompass the traditional findings of empirical research by the discovery of generalizations.

Miles and Huberman (1984) attempted to impose positivistic validity and reliability criteria on qualitative research. These authors sought the development of an integrated model because "we need to be confident that the conclusions are not unreasonable, that another researcher facing the data would reach a conclusion that falls in the same general 'truth space'" (p. 22). The search for the generalizable verification of results from qualitative research also was proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) who

applied procedures such as "members check" to establish criteria for credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to qualitative research.

This proposal of techniques to enable qualitative research to assume the positivistic characteristics of validity, generalizability, and replicability aroused strong arguments from reactive authors who viewed such imposition as the subsuming of qualitative research by the empirical model. Marshall's (1984) reaction to the proposals in Miles and Huberman's work were that: "Qualitative research must not be beaten into submission to the approximations of the methods and criteria set by the positivists" (p. 28). Morgan (1983) also reacted to the proposals of this position when he argued that:

> there is a tendency for the criteria traditionally used to evaluate positivistic research to be applied in the judgment of all kinds of knowledge claims . . . this is based on a major fallacy and logical error that rules for conducting research are mistakenly seen as rules of justification for the evaluation of the knowledge. (p. 392).

Popkewitz (1984) indicated that field work in empiricism does not have the same goal as field work in qualitative research:

> The purpose of field work within the empirical-analytic paradigm is to lead to the development of behaviorally oriented concepts and propositions that are testable and predictable. The goal remains quantitative theory with observational techniques a step in that direction. (p. 39)

The critics of those who impose positivistic criteria on qualitative research contended that, while this imposition may make qualitative research more acceptable to traditional researchers, qualitative results are somehow manipulated into the positivist model and that qualitative research is no longer qualitative when quantitative criteria are imposed on it.

More recently, Evers and Lakomski (1993) proposed that positivism should not be replaced by other paradigms, but the inherent limitations of paradigms should induce theorists and researchers to include all paradigm positions, including positivism:

> For just as positivistically construed science of administration sought to exclude non-science from administrative theory, so the main theoretical alternatives which developed in opposition to positivism show an understandable but equally regrettable tendency seriously to limit, or even exclude, science from administrative theory. The tendency is regrettable because scientific knowledge is also of great value, and the resulting exclusions are methodologically suspect because the knowledge used to justify them may be less reliable than the knowledge denied. (p. 140)

But the science proposed by Evers and Lakomski (1996) is not the traditional approach to science, but an approach that is "a better, broader, and more inclusive account of science; one which is able to accommodate, for example, subjectivity and ethics" (pp. 29-30).

In order to accommodate subjectivity and ethics in science, Evers and Lakomski (1994) suggested that superempirical criteria of theory choice be included in scientific investigation. These criteria included consistency, comprehensiveness, simplicity, and

explanatory unity and would be known as coherence criteria. Coherence criteria, as explained by Evers and Lakomski (1996), meant that:

> All epistemologies need to cohere with accounts of how humans learn, or acquire knowledge. Because we think the best theories of learning come from natural science accounts of human information processing in the brain, rather than the a priori, or commonsense, accounts more typical of philosophical invention, our coherentism coheres with natural science. (p. 381)

This imposition of coherence criteria on scientific investigation sought to detach science from positivism and presented a postpositivistic view of science. The proposals of Evers and Lakomski have not been without criticism. Bates (1992) argued that coherence theory is still too imbued in scientism because "there is a total denial of the social: a reduction of the social to the psychological, the psychological to the biological and the biological to the physical" (p. 10).

Authors who seek to impose positivistic criteria on qualitative research methodologies do so without regard to the paradigmatic assumptions upon which research is based. There is no actual synthesis of methods sought, but a means, whereby, empiricism would continue to be "the" research method in sociobehavioral ad educational administration investigation.

Critique of Positivism

Even though the research and theories of educational administration in the United States are influenced strongly by the logical positivistic mode, some educational administration theorists and some sociobehavioral theorists question the positivistic theoretical position and its derived methodology. They doubt that positivistic inquiry is sufficient in presenting a comprehensive explication of human behavior in general and of educational administration behavior in particular. Willower (1992) argued that positivism never was "a serious strand of scholarship in educational administration" (p. 4). Willower also saw that various studies of the content of educational administration journals concluded that empirical work remains a substantial component of the published material.

Critique of Positivistic Sociobehavioral Theory

The literature regarding the paradigmatic bases for sociobehavioral theory has been highly contentious regarding the theoretical basis for the explanation of human behavior. Abel (1981), Berger and Luckmann (1966), Giddens (1979), and Perrow (1982) questioned the positivistic position as appropriate for studying human behavior because of the positivistic assumption that all of reality can be known through the use of objective measures. These authors posited the claim that knowledge of human behavior can be understood by constructed phenomena and, therefore, assumed either the lack of the existence of an objective external reality and/or the intrusiveness and creativity of the human mind in knowing reality.

Gergen (1982) elucidated this concern over the application of the scientific method to the study of human behavior, when he explained:

> With all its attempts to emulate natural science inquiry, the past century of sociobehavioral research and theory has failed to yield one principle as reliable as Archimedes' principle of hydrostatics or Galileo's law of uniformity of accelerated motion. (p. 2)

Bernstein (1976) argued that scientism has become not just one form of knowledge but that scientism has become equated with knowledge itself and that theory derived from the application of the empirical method to human behavior has been found to be incomplete.

These concerns of some sociobehavioral theorists in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s regarding the inability of the positivistic paradigm to acknowledge subjective knowledge, and the paucity of meaningful results when empirical methodology is applied to human behavior, also are being raised as concerns by some educational administration theorists.

Critique of Positivistic Educational Administration Theory

The results of empirical research in educational administration have produced controversy. According to Evers and Lakomski (1996), "Educational administration, in common with most of the applied social sciences, has experienced a growing appreciation of the methodological weaknesses inherent in positivist construals of science and its methods" (p. 14). Discussion in this area ranges from positivistic methodology having produced little or no results with end product being no real theory of educational

administration to positivistic methodology being improperly applied to educational administration behavior and thus producing few significant results.

Glass (1979) exemplified those theorists who criticized the paucity of results in the application of empirical research to educational administration practice when he explained:

> The payoff of quantitative program evaluations to program administrators and bureaucrats has been far less than anticipated. Administrators had expected these types of evaluations to identify "what works," "who gets better," "what areas to change," and so on. These expectations have not been generally met. (p. 39).

On a theoretical and practical level, positivism has been found wanting in providing answers for the practitioner.

Glass (1979) also argued that most of the 33 percent of the significant educational variables found by positivistic research can be attributed to the research design and not the real behavior of educators. Even a leading proponent of positivism, such as Griffiths (1983), critiqued the use of logical positivism in educational administration research due to the researchers not adhering to strict empirical rules. Griffiths indicated that past and present educational research tends to be positivistic, but in a loosely constructed manner.

Evers and Lakomski (1994) likewise contended that the methodological approach of positivism to educational administration is too limited:

> Logical empiricism's theory of knowledge is too narrow to be usefully applied to any systematic account of educational administration. While the statistical

> apparatus of quantitative research methodologies will always be able to extract patterns from survey and other data if the patterns are there to be found, the complexity of social phenomena rather sharply limits the scope for making sound inferences from these data. Generalizations are hard to come by. Moreover, much knowledge of organizations is acquired informally, not by processes associated with hypothetico-deductive testing of hypotheses, but by processes more akin to socialization and enculturation. (pp. 29-30)

Positivism is seen as too simplistic an approach to explain the complex world of practice in school administration.

Schrag (1992) summarized the main arguments against positivism as including reducing people to mechanistic systems, reducing complex human dynamics to simplistic patterns, and separating fact from values. Under the positivistic perspective, educational administration practice becomes manipulative in that it seeks to control people in an authoritarian manner. People do not need to think about what they will do, but just act in the way dictated by empirical research. Willower (1996) termed this form of practice "a kind of heartless, mechanistic form of administration" (p. 358)

Using empirical research to discover the most effective and efficient form of administrative practice has been found to be incongruous with the actual everyday practices of school administrators. Schon (1987) proposed that ". . .the problems of real-world practice do not present themselves to practitioners as well-formed structures. Indeed, they tend not to present themselves as problems at all but as messy indeterminate

situations" (p. 4). By extrapolating best practices of leaders from one organization to another form of organization, school leaders, under positivism, should learn how to practice only leadership which is empirically tested.

However, Kowalski and Reitzig (1993) argued that schools are so unique as to preclude this form of leadership generalizability:

> Like human beings, organizations share common features, but they can be distinguished from one another by visible and invisible characteristics that make each unique. Thus, a given school district not only differs from General Motors, it also possesses characteristics that separate it from all school districts. (p. 157)

According to the empirical method, generalizability between similar organizations and between similar role behaviors is assumed. Therefore, if A+B=C in one situation, then A+B=C should work in a similar situation. Human behavior is assumed to be linear. Those who oppose positivism argue that even though situations and role behaviors may appear to be similar, they are not because situations and persons are unique. This uniqueness causes a non-linear relationship in which A+B=D or F or Q in supposedly similar situations and people.

The application of positivism to school administration is also critiqued for eschewing the concepts of values and ethics. Effectiveness and efficiency are the primary concerns of positivistic theorists. Greenfield (1993) proposed that positivism confirms the status quo but does not question whether that which is ought to be. Likewise, Eisner

(1992) viewed positivism as regarding "ethical claims as meaningless utterances" (p. 8). Evers and Lakomski (1993) also criticized the traditional theories of educational administration for their exclusion of ethical claims and inner mental episodes. Positivistic theorists claim to expose what is the most effective practice for the school administrator based upon practice in similar situations, however, positivistic theorists do not claim to tell school administrators what is the best practice based on values and ethics.

In answer to such criticism, some proponents of positivism have called for a stricter application of empirical research rules for educational investigation. Coser (1975) suggested that while measurement has become more sophisticated, the concepts and theories underlying educational administration research are weak and need to be strengthened. Walberg (1984) viewed empiricism as the scientific basis for educational policy and practice and suggested that research methods in the natural sciences would provide a guideline for the improvements needed in educational research.

Critique of Critical Theory

Critical theory also is critiqued by those who find logical, epistemological, and practical flaws in its application to educational administration. As one pursues the philosophical obscurities of critical theory writings, one is able to discover four clear conceptual and methodological bases for critical theory: self-knowledge through self-reflection, critique of language by individuals and groups, critique of reified organizations, and critique of societal ideology. The ultimate goal is to emancipate the individual, groups, and society from externally imposed power through ideology. However, critics of

critical theory argue that its proponents often obfuscate these concepts. Willower (1992) argued that in relation to schools, "critical theory is seen as utopian, censorious, and out of touch with reality" (p. 9).

Robinson (1994) questioned why critical approaches to educational administration rarely move beyond critique to the transformational process. Giroux (1988) also contended that critical theory focuses on critique, while ignoring the ultimate goal of critical theory which is how to change the status quo:

> The necessity of hope as a precondition for radical thought and struggle is not generally characteristic of prevailing forms of radical educational theory in North America. In part, what currently passes for much of radical educational theory represents a language of critique, devoid of any language of possibility, which, in turn, represents a view of politics without the benefit of a substantive moral discourse or a programmatic vision of the future. There is a growing tendency, especially among a second generation of radical educational theorists, to eschew a logic of hope and possibility as the basis for theoretical and political engagement. (p. 204)

While the goal of critical theory is to change the individual and, ultimately, society, critical theory appears to be mired in words not actions. Robinson's review of critical research projects in education determined that these projects often stop short of the social action which is purported to be the hallmark of this approach.

Apple (1996), a major writer in the field of critical theory, also criticized this focus on words and not on action: "all too many 'critical educational theorists' coin trendy neologisms but remain all too disconnected from the lives and struggles of real people in real institutions" (p. 44). The focus of critical theory is to critique the current situation through words in order to change the situation for the better. If the words are obscure and the method stagnates at the level of critique, then critical theory becomes an elitist approach of pure rhetoric with no practical application for educators.

The method of critique itself has been impugned as both distorting reality and as causing divisiveness. Maddock (1990) proposed that the critical perspective on education "... is limited and tends to distort and disguise the actual conditions that hold among knowledge, expertise, and social power" (p. 289). By assuming that power, control, and subordination are under only the ideological perspective, critical theory is viewed as being closed in its vision of reality and how to change reality. Robinson (1994) continued this critique of critical theory by arguing that the critical approach presumes conflict is unhelpful and mistakenly interprets responsibility as external to the individual or groups engaging in critique.

In 1980, van den Berg posited inherent logical flaws in the critical theory paradigm because, if people are able to choose freely, then people are able to choose the irrational as well as the rational. van den Berg also argued that the higher truth sought by critical theorists is undefined, unverifiable, and elusive.

Willower (1992) argued that the future of critical theory in education is bleak:

> . . . critical theory would likely become a more diffuse, less uniform view with a less cohesive set of adherents, something already typical for 'schools' of thought. Another possibility, consistent with the history of Marxism, is a breakup into warring factions. This would probably give critical theory the look of a members-only debating society, even less relevant to issues in school administration that it is currently. (p. 16)

Because the basis of critical theory is communication through words, the words of critical theorists may cause dissension among the theorists and cause critical theory to break up into many factions.

A major focus for reflection and critique by educational critical theorists is the curriculum in the schools, whether the curriculum be apparent or hidden. However, Hlebowitch (1997) argued that all this focus on curriculum has produced no change in curriculum:

> But while the curriculum literature (its journals and conference papers) clearly reflects new concerns, mostly emerging from the academic left, the actual content of the US school curriculum has remained relatively unaffected. The waters ripple with rhetoric about counterhegemony, critical consciousness and psychoanalytic understanding why deep old-world currents continue to move the school in predictable directions. One has to wonder about the character of this so-called re-conceptualization when one views it in the light of school practice. It is fair to say that the reconceptualization of the field has occurred

> in the playground of the abstract, created in the academic cloister, largely removed from the perturbations of school life. It has given us some perspective, but it has not given us a body of curriculum theory that is responsive to the social and political realities of the school. Too often it has promulgated criticism as theory, but it has left 'theory' in a ghettoized state--without a school constituency and without a compass for action. (p. 507)

Again, critical theory is criticized for remaining at the abstract, critical level focusing on what is wrong in education without moving toward the rational manner in which to change educational problems.

Those who oppose critical theory argue that this paradigm stagnates at the level of criticism, maintains an obscurity of words, does not move on to action, distorts reality and is an elitist approach. If critical theory is based on the assumption of immanent criticism of all aspects of reality, then critical theory itself must be open to criticism. Critical theorists must assume a critical stance as relates to critical theory and reflect on the reality versus the ideal in order to maintain a critical perspective on critical theory.

A CALL FOR RAPPROCHEMENT

The replacement of positivism in educational administration with any other paradigm will cause the same form of debates to occur. As Frank (1984) indicated, positivism has served educational administration well, but incompletely. Every other research paradigm also has limitations and "when research paradigm turns to research ideology, the seeds for decreasing usefulness are sown" (p. 13). No one paradigm can be

"the" paradigm for educational administration because of the limitations inherent in each paradigm. Because paradigms are man-made explanations of reality, as such, they reflect the limitations of human nature. Each paradigm can be critiqued because each paradigm has inherent limitations. If any paradigm existed which could not be criticized, then that paradigm would deserve the position of primacy. Whichever paradigm is viewed as dominant will receive the same criticism as positivism.

The acceptance or rejection of alternative paradigms in the field of educational administration will have significant implications for how educational administration is conceptualized, researched, and practiced. Paradigms and their derived research methodologies provide a conceptual richness and diversity which no isolated mode of research can ever provide. In order for researchers and practitioners to become aware of these significant consequences of paradigmatic choice, there must first be an awareness that alternative paradigms exist.

No one paradigm holds the "answer" to reality. Even the attempt to combine paradigms and methods has conceptual and logical limitations. The resolution to paradigmatic dissension in the field of educational administration can occur only when theoreticians, researchers, and practitioners accept these limitations and begin to view paradigms as different perspectives on a common reality. Paradigms should be seen as alternative views of reality--alternative views which are equal in status and provide possible choices for the theoretician, researcher, and practitioner.

The obstructionists who oppose alternative paradigms engage in second-level arguments in that paradigms are belief systems based on belief systems. Paradigms are not fixed perspectives of reality, but paradigms are historically formalized perspectives of people's beliefs about reality. Paradigms were created by men and women and have become viewed by people as existing alternatives. However, paradigms are alternative only insofar as they are formalized perspectives of reality which people can accept as being most similar to their own beliefs about reality. These formalized belief systems provide men and women with a general conceptual framework to which they can adhere. Because paradigms are second-level belief systems, people accept these systems in response to a human social need to provide meaning for reality in a formalized manner. But, people's personal belief systems may be more comprehensive than the formal conceptual framework to which they adhere professionally. Because the accepted paradigm incorporates the majority of a person's perspective of reality, however that perspective was developed, that person would be considered to be an advocate of that accepted paradigm.

Lather (1986) called for experimentation in research: "My goal is to move research in many different and, indeed, contradictory directions in the hope that more interesting and useful ways of knowing will emerge" (p. 272). Marshall and Anderson (1994) advocated new theory development in education: "New theoretical perspectives can make visible those aspects of traditional educational phenomena made invisible by

previous theoretical frames. New theories can also illuminate previously ignored phenomena, opening up new areas for critical examination" (p. 169).

By exposure to alternative paradigms at the theoretical and philosophical levels, researchers and practitioners should become more tolerant of different views of reality which men and women have created conceptually. This exposure should assist in breaking down conceptual prejudices by allowing paradigms other than positivism to become the basis for accepted educational administration inquiry.

While critical theory is a prominent alternative to positivism, the field of educational administration remains grounded in the traditional positivistic perspective. The current movement toward acceptance of paradigms as alternatives to the positivism by educational administration theorists, researchers, and practitioners allows for divergent and convergent views of administrative reality which open new possibilities for research and practice. To return to the epistemological bases for paradigms, how one views reality has profound implications for all of one's personal and professional beliefs and their resultant actions. As Lutz (1992) clarified, "In our temporal world, there cannot be a single 'reality,' a single 'truth.' We can only seek 'truth,' and our ways of seeking truth should not be more limited than need be" (p. 465).

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